

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Original) A rotatable anvil for a rotary cutting unit, comprising: an axle;
at least one anvil portion adapted to cooperate with a knife member of a rotary cutter;
a pair of load transmitting portions adapted to abut a pair of abutment members of the rotary cutter and arranged adjacent respective axial ends of said at least one anvil portion; and
load receiving members disposed axially between said at least one anvil portion and respective load transmitting portions, each load receiving member being connected by a bearing to the axle, wherein the axle is rotatable relative to the load receiving members.
2. (Original) The rotatable anvil according to claim 1, wherein said at least one anvil portion consists of a single anvil portion.
3. (Withdrawn) The rotatable anvil according to claim 1 wherein said at least one anvil portion comprises a plurality of axially spaced anvil portions.
4. (Original) A rotary cutting unit comprising a rotary cutting drum and a rotatable anvil, arranged therebeneath;
said cutting drum comprising at least one knife member disposed between a pair of axially spaced abutment members;

said rotatable anvil comprising an axle, at least one anvil portion arranged opposite the at least one knife member, and a pair of load transmitting portions abutting respective ones of said abutment members, and load receiving members disposed between said at least one anvil portion and respective ones of said load transmitting members, each of said load receiving members connected to said axle by a bearing; and

a load applying mechanism arranged to apply to the load receiving members a variable upward force.

5. (Original) The rotary cutting unit according to claim 4 wherein said at least one knife member consists of a centrally-disposed knife member and said at least one anvil portion consists of a single anvil portion.

6. (Withdrawn) The rotary cutting unit according to claim 4 wherein said at least one knife member comprises a plurality of axially spaced knife members, and said at least one anvil portion comprises a plurality of axially spaced anvil portions.

7. (Original) The rotary cutting unit according to claim 4 wherein said at least one knife member comprises a plurality of axially spaced knife members, and said at least one anvil portion consists of a single anvil portion.

8. (Original) The rotary cutting unit according to claim 4 wherein the load applying mechanism comprises fluid-actuated cylinders engaging respective load receiving members.

9. (Withdrawn) A cutting method utilizing a rotary cutting unit that includes a rotary cutting drum and a rotatable anvil arranged therebeneath, the cutting drum carrying a knife structure; wherein items being cut are passed between the knife structure and an anvil portion of the anvil; the cutting drum including axially spaced abutment members engaging respective axially spaced load transmitting members of the anvil; the anvil including axially spaced load receiving members disposed axially between the anvil portion and respective load transmitting members, the method comprising the step of applying an upward force to each of the load receiving members during a cutting operation, wherein the total upward force exceeds the weight of the anvil.